



DEAN OF STUDENTS

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www.ramapo.edu

February 2008

Dear Undergraduate Members of the Class of 2008:

At the commencement ceremony on May 16, 2008, a representative of the Class of 2008 will be asked to give greetings and a short address to those gathered for the occasion. You are invited to apply to be that representative provided you have graduated in **January 2008** or have a graduation application on file for **May 2008 or August 2008**. (Note: Graduation applications must be on file in the Office of Academic Affairs by **January 31** if you plan to graduate on **May 16**. If you plan to graduate in **August**, you must have a graduation application on file before you submit this form.) If you are eligible and interested in applying for this honor, you should do the following:

1. Prepare a detailed address designed to last not more than **three** minutes. This address should extend greetings to the audience and contain remarks which are relevant to the occasion and of interest to a wide audience. You must submit the entire text of the speech. (See below for some hints regarding things to consider when preparing your address.)
2. The only place your name should be written is on the Graduation Speech Proposal Data Form (see other side). The speech itself should **NOT** have your name on it. Speeches should be stapled to the Data Form. Any speech with a name on it will **NOT** be considered.
3. Complete the data form on the reverse side of this letter.
4. Please hand deliver or mail the draft of your speech, the data form, and an audio recording\* of you giving the speech **as you would on commencement day** to Bonnie Caruso in an envelope. The envelope should be addressed as follows: Bonnie Caruso, Student Affairs, Ramapo College of New Jersey, 505 Ramapo Valley Road, Mahwah, New Jersey 07430-1680. (The above materials must be received by Mrs. Caruso by 4:00 pm on March 7, 2008.) If you are hand delivering the envelope, Student Affairs is located in room C-212.

After the deadline of March 7, 2008 at 4pm, a committee will review the submissions. Information provided on the data form will be used to inform committee members about the writer's background and to break ties in case more than one speech is considered outstanding. (Note: Members of the committee review the written texts and are not aware of the writer's name. Only after the group is reduced to a very small number of finalists does the committee listen to the CDs and tapes, and review the personal information provided.) In such a case, a student with high grades, good recommendations, longer attendance at Ramapo and /or a record of service to the community will be given preference. The person chosen will be notified by mail and will be offered assistance (editing, typing, duplicating, etc.) in completing the final draft of the speech.

This is a wonderful opportunity. I hope you will consider applying for this honor. **(We usually receive less than one dozen submissions, so your chance of selection is actually quite high.)**

Sincerely,

Nancy Mackin  
Dean of Students

\* If you do not have access to the technology required to make an audio tape, please come to the Student Affairs Office and we will make the arrangements for you.

**Examples from the past of what the selection committee is/ is not looking for in a speech:**

1. Thoughtful and insightful writing and **robust** delivery (tape)
2. Relevant quotes that have not been overused
3. Connection between Ramapo experiences and the future
4. Understanding the mission, culture, and values of Ramapo as embodied in the experiences of the Class
5. Impact Ramapo has had on the lives of those in the Class
6. Humor (no "inside" jokes)
7. No more than 3 minutes, but not too short

The Selection Committees have not generally chosen speeches that recount personal stories, single out individual faculty or staff for praise (collective praise is good!), or which are directed at only one segment of the Class, e.g., residential students, older/younger students, etc.

